



Energy and Environmental Affairs

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DCR's Universal Access Program to Host Adaptive Recreation Fair at Herter Park/Artesani Playground in Brighton

BOSTON – Seeking to increase access for all to the state parks system, the Department of Conservation and Recreation's (DCR) Universal Access Program (UAP) announced it will be hosting its 13th annual Adaptive Recreation Fair on Saturday, June 3, 2017, from 10:00AM to 3:00PM at Herter Park/Artesani Playground in Brighton. This free, family-friendly event offers accessible and inclusive activities like cycling, hiking, kite decorating, face painting, equipment demonstrations, games, music, and more. The Universal Access Program, now in its 22nd year of providing adaptive outdoor recreational opportunities within Massachusetts state parks for people with disabilities, invites the public to attend the event while enjoying scenic views of the Charles River.

"DCR's Universal Access Program is an excellent example of state government working to ensure that our state's parks, forests, beaches, and facilities provide worthwhile activities for everyone to enjoy," **said Energy and Environmental Affairs Secretary Matthew Beaton**. "The Baker-Polito Administration remains committed to providing these types of recreational opportunities for people of all abilities."

The DCR's Universal Access Program is kicking off the summer recreation season by bringing together over 20 organizations from across Massachusetts to promote adaptive recreation. With a strong network of equipment providers, the DCR aims to educate the public about the opportunities, accessible programs, and resources that are available to individuals with disabilities statewide. Recreation organizations will highlight the wide range of adaptive equipment and products that help people with disabilities access the great outdoors. Light snacks, coffee, and bottled water will be provided free of charge, while supplies last. Ice cream and hot dogs will be available for purchase in the afternoon.

"With one of the largest state parks systems in the nation, the Department of Conservation and Recreation is responsible for ensuring that Massachusetts' natural, cultural, and recreational resources are available, accessible, and shared by all," **said DCR Commissioner Leo Roy**. "With the summer season just beginning, I look forward to seeing the results of our successful partnerships with so many organizations who have committed to promoting adaptive recreation across the state."

The Universal Access Program's goal is to offer enjoyable experiences within state parks, regardless of one's abilities. Summer adaptive programs offered include kayaking, canoeing, cycling, hiking, swimming, rowing, and sailing. Winter programs offered include snowshoeing, cross-country skiing, kick-sledding, snowmobiling, and ice skating.

"DCR's Universal Access Program is one of the most innovative and groundbreaking programs in the nation," **said UAP Program Director Tom McCarthy**. "It has helped make the recreation programs in our state and urban parks more inclusive, so that people with disabilities can participate independently or with their friends and families in a wide variety of activities."

The DCR appreciates the generous support from the PLAN of MA and RI for providing tables and chairs for the event. Whole Foods Market, Legal Sea Foods, Shaw's/Star Market, Starbucks, and Big Y are among the organizations that have donated supplies for the event. For more details or to register for the Adaptive Recreation Fair, call Gigi Ranno at 781-254-4720 or email Gigi.Ranno@state.ma.us. For more information on DCR's Universal Access Program, visit www.mass.gov/dcr/universal-access or call Marcy Marchello at 413-545-5758.

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The Massachusetts Department of Conservation and Recreation (DCR), an agency of the Executive Office of Energy and Environmental Affairs, oversees 450,000 acres of parks and forests, beaches, bike trails, watersheds, dams, and parkways. Led by Commissioner Leo Roy, the agency's mission is to protect, promote, and enhance our common wealth of natural, cultural, and recreational resources. To learn more about DCR, our facilities, and our programs, please visit www.mass.gov/dcr. Contact us at mass.parks@state.ma.us.

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